

September 7, 2010

Dear Saint Paul Property Owner:

The City of Saint Paul Department of Public Works will hold a neighborhood meeting to present a Residential Street Vitality Program (RSVP) project to be constructed in your neighborhood over the summer of 2011. (See the project map attached.) This meeting is an opportunity to learn about the construction process and for you to inform city staff of your concerns. The meeting for the **Davern-Jefferson Phase II RSVP Project** will be held

**6:30-8:30 PM, Wednesday, September 22, 2010**

**Hillcrest Recreation Center Auditorium  
1978 Ford Parkway**

#### **General Street Reconstruction Information**

Street reconstruction includes concrete curb and gutter, storm sewer catch basins, sewer and water main repairs as needed, bituminous pavement, concrete outwalks and driveway aprons, sodded boulevards, boulevard trees, lantern style street lighting, and public art. In addition, as part of the City's Emerald Ash Borer Management Program, all ash trees in the boulevards will be removed by the City prior to the start of construction.

Construction is expected to begin in May and be completed by November. During the project, the street will be dug up several times because the work is done in stages, and often by different crews. They may not work on your block every day. In fact, there may be several days, even weeks, when no work is done on your block. Construction work is very dependant on the weather, but in general, expect about 4 months of disruption on your block.

The contractors must maintain access for emergency vehicles at all times. Access to at least one end of the alleys will be maintained at all times. A "Road Closed" sign at the end of the block does not mean you cannot get to your house. If you have a driveway off the street, there will likely be only a few days when you will not be able to use it. Alley openings and driveway access will be restricted when the concrete curb and gutter is poured, and when the concrete aprons are poured. The construction inspector will notify you when the work will be done at your driveway, including the details for when you will be able to drive over it again.

Some of the specific topics to be discussed at the meeting are as follows.

#### **Street Widths**

Standard residential streets in Saint Paul are generally built 32' wide. Since most existing streets in this area are 30' wide, and there are lots of mature trees in the boulevards, the City is proposing to reconstruct all these streets matching the existing 30' width.

#### **Water Services**

As part of this project, Saint Paul Regional Water Services will replace all lead water services from the water main to the property line at no additional cost to the homeowner. This is typically done ahead of the start of the Public Works project itself. Most, but not all, homes in this project area have lead water service pipes. If you have a lead water service, you will receive a letter from **Saint Paul Regional Water Services** with details about what to expect from the replacement program. If you wish to replace the portion of the water service on your private property, you must hire a private contractor. A list of private contractors who can do this work will be included with the letter. If you have any questions, you can contact the **Regional Water** service desk at **651-266-6270**.

The homes that are having their lead water service replaced in the right of way will receive a notice the day before, explaining that their water will be temporarily shut off for this replacement work.

The hydrants and water mains may also be replaced near your property. The hydrants are typically replaced during the winter and early spring, before the project begins. If that is the case, a notice will be placed on your front door that your water will be shut off for the day. Any water main replacements will be done during the Public Works construction project. If the water main in front of your home needs replacing, you will be put on a temporary water main that runs above ground while the regular main is installed and tested.

### **Gas Meters**

If your gas meter is still inside your home, Xcel Energy will probably be working on your block to update their system and to move those meters to the outsides of the houses. For more information about natural gas work on your street, please contact **Jeff Schmidt, Xcel Energy**, at **651-229-2329**.

### **Sewers**

The Public Works Contractor will be installing or repairing storm and sanitary sewer mains and building catch basins as part of the project. During the design process, the City will inspect the sanitary sewer main and the connections to the main of the services from the homes. If there are indications that your service connection is bad, we will send you a letter suggesting that you have it repaired. Keep in mind, all work on the sanitary service, even in the right of way, is the property owner's responsibility.

**If you already have problems with your sanitary sewer service, or even if you don't yet, now is the time to get it replaced. You can save money if your service is repaired during construction versus after.** Repairs at the connection to the main, or along the sewer service from the main to the property line, can be done by the City's contractor at the property owner's request. You will need to sign a waiver form from the City if you would like the contractor to do that work. Waiver forms will be available at the meeting, or can be requested by calling me at 651-266-6117. The cost for doing this work can be added to the assessment for your property.

Any sewer repair work desired by the owner on private property must be done by a private contractor. Please contact the **Sewer Utility Service Desk, 651-266-6234**, for more detailed information regarding your private sewer service.

### **Outwalks and Carriage walks**

**Outwalks** are the sidewalks that run from the mainline walk to the street. They will all be replaced as part of the construction project. The outwalk location will be moved if it is within 5' of an existing tree, to help prevent tree roots from heaving the walk up in the future. If you do not want an outwalk, please let me know. Otherwise, a 3' wide outwalk will be constructed at every residence.

**Carriage walks** are the narrow sidewalks that run parallel to and just behind the edge of the street. These will be removed with the project and, according to City policy, not replaced.

### **Boulevard Gardens and Sprinklers**

Some residents may have gardens in their boulevards. The boulevards will be cleared and graded as part of the construction. If you have plants you want to keep, I suggest you move them before the construction begins so the plants are not damaged in early stages of the work. The Contractor will install topsoil and sod on the boulevard after the street work is done. If you do not want sod, please give me a call and let me know.

Sprinkler systems in the boulevard will likely also be damaged during construction. It is the property owner's responsibility to remove the system before construction begins, or repair it when it is damaged by the contractors. Please wait until the sod has been laid before you replace or repair your sprinkler.

### **Ash Trees in the Boulevards**

In 2009, a noxious insect, the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), was found to have invaded the Hampden Park neighborhood of Saint Paul. In states like Ohio and Michigan, where this insect has gained a foothold, EAB has proven to be deadly to nearly all ash trees. Wishing to cost effectively replace trees likely to be affected in a timely manner, the City has decided to remove all boulevard ash trees where major construction is scheduled. In the Davern-Jefferson Phase II RSVP project there are approximately 102 ash trees that will be removed and replaced with other species in

conjunction with this street project. The City's policy for dealing with the Emerald Ash Borer will be further explained at the meeting.

### **Public Art**

In 2009, the City Council passed an ordinance that 1% of the cost of most public construction projects in Saint Paul be designated for the addition of public art to that project. The City's Public Art Ordinance Administrator will be at the meeting to explain what this means to the project, and to help the neighborhood start to think about public art opportunities for the Davern-Jefferson Phase II project.

### **Street Lighting**

New lantern style street lights will be installed in the project area. The existing street lights on wood poles will be removed once the new street lights are operational. The wood poles will be removed if they only carry a street light. If they also have electrical, phone or cable TV lines, they will remain in place. Xcel and other utilities do not bury their over-head lines as part of construction projects like this unless that work is paid for by the affected property owners.

### **Assessments**

The total cost of this project is estimated at \$3.7 million. The project is funded by **assessments to the property owners** that benefit from the project, and by Street Improvement Bonds. The assessments cover approximately 25% of project cost. The 2011 assessment rates have not yet been set by the City Council, but we anticipate them to be around **\$50.00 per linear foot of street frontage**. Corner residential lots are assessed for the short side only. Commercial lots, including apartment buildings, are assessed for both sides.

Final assessments for this project will be approved in the fall of 2011, as the construction is nearing completion. A bill will then be sent to the property owners. Whatever portion of the bill that is not paid within 30 days will automatically go onto the property taxes, where it can be paid out over 20 years with simple interest. There is a senior citizen deferment program for those over 65. For more information on payment of the assessments, contact the **Real Estate Division** at **651-266-8858**.

### **Reconstruction Project Optional Add-Ons**

**Alley paving** is a feature that can be added to the project. This work is 100% assessed to the abutting property owners. The work must have City Council approval before it can be added to a project. Contact **Pete Gallagher at 651-266-6085** for more information on having your alley paved.

We plan to start construction in the project area in the spring of 2011 and be completed with the area by fall. You will receive a letter from the construction manager about a week before the Public Works portion of the project is started. I recommend keeping that letter for its useful information and phone number list that you may want to refer to later during the construction.

Project updates will be available on the City's web site: [www.ci.stpaul.mn.us/](http://www.ci.stpaul.mn.us/). From there, look across the top and click on Government, then Public Works, then Street Construction Projects from the list on the right side, then scroll down to see the project you are interested in. I hope to have this web site active for the 2011 projects yet this fall, but it will not be updated on a very regular basis until construction begins.

If you have questions or comments that need to be addressed before the meeting, feel free to contact me at 651-266-6117.

Sincerely,

Lisa Falk-Thompson, P.E.  
Project Engineer